



The NOTIONS of the
METHODISTS

Farther Disprov'd, &c. in a Second Letter

To the Rev. Mr. JOHN WESLEY.



(Price Six-pence)

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OF THE
METHODISTS

Farther Disprov'd, in Answer to their
EARNEST APPEAL, &c.

WITH A
Vindication of the Clergy of the Church
of *England* from their Aspersions.

In a Second Letter
To the Reverend Mr JOHN WESLEY. *K*

ACTS XX. 30.
*Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse
things, to draw away disciples after them.*

NEWCASTLE:
Printed by J. WHITE, and sold by him and the
Bookfellers both in Town and Country.

MDCCLIII.

NOTICE
OF THE
METHODIST

Trusting this notice to be of service to them

FARNWORTH APPARAL CO.

WITH A

Indication of the History of the Church
of England in Apparal



in the lower

To the Reverend Mr John Wesley.

A.C.T. 17. 30.

And if you are found with this notice, you are
to be taken away from the church.

NEWCASTLE

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Houlston's Book to Town and Country.

MDCCLXIII

The NOTIONS of the
METHODISTS

Farther Disprov'd, &c. in a Second Letter

To the Rev. Mr JOHN WESLEY.

Reverend Sir,

WHEN your *Earnest Appeal*, &c. came to my hands, I was in hopes to have found in it something either to confirm or contradict the doctrine contain'd in my Letter to you; wherein I drew up, in as short a compass as I could, what I take to be the doctrine of our Church concerning those points, about which you have been pleas'd of late most unhappily to disturb its peace, and the heads of your hearers. I expected, from a person who had for so many years employ'd all his thoughts in attaining clear conceptions of these things, and the greatest part of his time in zealously propagating them, and who is withal (in his own fancy at least) bless'd with such extraordinary illuminations, that I should have reap'd great benefit by my correspondence with you; and that, by your wise instructions, my poor understanding would have been much enlighten'd.

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But to my great surprize, and (I have some reason to think) to the admiration of many others, you have not vouchsafed to take the least notice of what I have advanc'd with regard to the points of doctrine; only in general by way of contempt, it may be suppos'd, of so mean a writer, you in profound humility inform the world, *I am unacquainted with the merits of the cause, and not only perfectly a stranger to your life, preaching and writings, but also to the word of God, and to the Articles and Homilies of our Church.*

'Tis true, I never had the curiosity to hear you preach, neither do I ever design it, so long as you continue in your present disorderly course; but as to your writings, I am not so great a stranger to them as you would suggest, having perus'd several of your discourses, and been strangely shock'd at the amazing accounts you give of yourself and others in your Journals. And I am apt to think, upon a more careful and considerate reading of my Letter, you will find several particulars of it diametrically opposite to what you teach; so that it is in vain to pretend I have not touch'd the merits of the cause. Nay, you as good as confess I have come pretty close to the matter in debate, by your affirming, in such a candid and Christian manner, that I am so perfect a stranger to the word of God, and to the Articles and Homilies of the Church of *England*; by which you can mean nothing else, but that the doctrine I have deliver'd is contrary to that which you imagine you have prov'd from thence.

But whatever opinion you may allow yourself to entertain of my ignorance, perhaps there are others, at least as knowing in these matters as yourself, who will not altogether agree with you in so harsh a censure, and will rather look upon this your behaviour, as a fresh mark of your despising

spising your brethren, and a spice of something yet unmortified in you.

I willingly acknowledge myself far inferior to one of your high attainments, who esteem yourself abundantly qualified to take upon you the care of all the Churches, and therefore no doubt justly entitle yourself to look down with a scornful pity upon men of lower endowments. But for all that, I shall not think myself bound to submit to your authority, to what high pitch soever you may exalt it, unless you prove your doctrine much more strongly than you have already done, to be agreeable to the Scriptures, and the determinations of our Church, and mine to be repugnant to them. But I now begin to despair of your making such an attempt, since it is easy enough to discover your talent does not so much lie in close arguing as in a loose way of haranguing, and thereby working upon the passions of the ignorant, which does not require a cool head, but only a warm imagination.

Thus it is you draw disciples after you, and this is the method all other sectaries take to delude the people. They make a fair shew in the flesh; they take what care they can to secure the form of godliness; they make their Appeals to the world, that they are not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, and the like; and in the words of the spotless Lamb himself, they solemnly demand, *which of you now convinces us of sin*, or can personally convict us of any ungodliness, or unholiness of conversation? And lastly, with good words, and fair speeches, they deceive the hearts of the people.

But what signify all these specious pretences, since the manifest end of them is deceit, and since those who use them, teach new doctrines, and in order to make them spread the farther, cause factions and divisions in the Church? And that you

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are justly chargeable with this sin, I shall now endeavour to convince you, in hopes of working your amendment, which God grant.

In your second Journal you give us a large account of your travels into *Germany*, of your conversing with those holy men (as you call them) the *Moravians*, (but who seem to me no better than a company of illiterate Enthusiasts) and of the doctrine which they taught, and you approve of as sound and orthodox. But this I need not stay to confute, the Rev. Mr *Tucker*, in his excellent Book, intitled, *A Brief History of the Principles of the Methodists*, having substantially done it to my hand, by shewing, in a clear and convincing manner, the many absurdities and inconsistencies of it. And I must needs say, that till you have made a solid reply to that piece, all considering men must admire at your behaviour, and many will believe themselves to have evident proof you are obstinate in error, and condemn'd by the judgment even of your own conscience.

In page 81 of your third Journal, you tell us in what points you differ from a part of the Clergy of the Church of *England*, by which, as appears from other places of your writings, you mean the much greatest part, who, as you slanderously affirm, dissent from the Church's doctrine.

“ First (*you say*) they speak of Justification, either as the same thing with Sanctification, or as something consequent upon it. You believe Justification to be wholly distinct from Sanctification, and necessarily antecedent to it.” To this I answer, that here you are not positive they confound Justification and Sanctification, or make them one and the same thing. If therefore you had not bore some ill will to your brethren, and had a strong inclination to blacken them, one may rea-

reasonably suppose you would have omitted such an insinuation.

'Tis very true they do assert, and upon good grounds, that Justification is in its nature something consequent upon Sanctification; for this is agreeable to the whole tenor of the Scriptures. Our blessed Saviour gives his disciples a commission to teach, or make disciples of, *all nations by baptizing them, and in order to this, by teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded them*, as St Matthew informs us. St Mark informs us, that our Lord enjoin'd them to go into all the world, and to preach the gospel to every creature, and told them, *that he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damn'd*. And to shew that repentance is included in believing, St Luke declares our Saviour order'd them to *preach Repentance and Remission of sins, in his name, among all nations*.

Accordingly we find St Peter directing his countrymen, who desired to know of him what they must do to free themselves from the guilt of crucifying our Saviour, *to repent and be baptized every one of them in the name of Jesus Christ for the Remission of sins; and to repent and be converted, that their sins might be blotted out*. And St Paul also assures us, that, in order to their conversion, he testified both to the Jews and Greeks *Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*. And in his Epistle to the Hebrews, he calls *Repentance from dead works, and faith towards God*, a part of the first principles or rudiments of christianity, in which men were instructed before baptism, and which were to precede it. And to shew that Sanctification is previous to Justification, he says expressly, *that by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*; that is, through the expiation upon the cross, all penitent sinners, made

made holy by the grace of God, are freed from the guilt and punishment of their sins.

And to the *Corinthians*, *But ye are wash'd*, (says he) *but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified*; where the two latter are manifestly explanatory of the former. By *wash'd* is meant their baptism, and by their baptism is meant, first their Sanctification, and then their Justification, to shew that God in baptism remits the sins of only penitent believers, and gives them a right to everlasting bliss. St *Peter* also, writing to the dispers'd *Jews*, calls them the Elect on two accounts; first, thro' the sanctification of the spirit unto obedience, when they were call'd by the preaching of the Gospel, and then through the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, which clearly denotes their Justification or remission of sins in baptism. Agreeably to this, the same Apostle affirms, that *baptism doth save us* or justify us, which does not only consist of the outward ceremony, *the putting away the filth of the flesh*, but also contains in it *the answer of a good conscience towards God*, whereby men beforehand declare their faith and repentance, and resolution to live as becomes those who enter into the Christian Covenant.

I have, I presume, said enough to satisfy any reasonable person, that at least some degree of Sanctification goes before Justification, and that the hearts of all adult persons must be purified by faith and repentance wrought in them by God's grace, before God will justify or pardon them in baptism. This then is the process of God's justifying adult persons, for I now speak of no other. By the preaching of the word, and the explanatory instructions of those who are God's Embassadors, to whom he hath committed the word of reconciliation, men are call'd upon to believe the truths of the Gospel, both speculative and practical, and
also

also its promises and threatnings, and to repent of their sins with full purpose of heart to forsake them, and amend their lives for the future. *And* God accompanies his word and his ministry with his grace, by the virtue and power of which they obey the heavenly call, and being sufficiently instructed in the Christian Religion, they are admitted to baptism, when first they covenant to renounce the devil, the world and the flesh, to believe all the articles of the christian faith, and to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of their life. Then the Minister, representing the person of God, baptizes them, and thereby pardons them who with hearty repentance and true faith have turn'd unto him, and gives them the compleat grace of Regeneration; that is, more fully sanctifies them, by conferring on them a larger measure of God's holy spirit, that they may persevere in their justified state to the end of their lives.

And thus Justification always supposes Sanctification antecedent to it: For as without holiness no man can see the Lord, or receive the reward of true believers; so neither can unsanctified persons be reconciled to God, or be in a state of salvation, which is the same thing as to be justified.

And that Sanctification precedes Justification at baptism, is plain also from the universal testimony and contest of the primitive church. Indeed, in the apostolical age, at the first plantation of christianity, as appears from the Acts of the Apostles, catechising was not long before baptism, which the infant state of the church, and the zeal of the converts, required. But in after-ages, upon the conversion of the heathens, it was found necessary to lengthen this time of trial, lest the Church should be fill'd with vicious men. For this reason they appointed several orders and degrees of catechumens,

mens, who, for some considerable time before baptism, were instructed in the principles of the Christian Religion, in the nature of repentance, and the terms of the gospel-covenant, and prepared themselves for this holy sacrament by prayers and abstinence.

And this appears from the account which *Justin Martyr* gives us: "As many (*says he*) as believe the things to be true which we teach, and promise to conform their lives to the laws of our religion, they first of all learn to ask pardon of God for their sins past, by prayers and fastings, we joining our prayers and fastings with theirs. Then they are brought by us to a place where there is water; and they are regenerated after the same manner of regeneration by which we ourselves were regenerated. We have receiv'd this account of this affair from the apostles. Since we, being ignorant of our first birth, were accustomed to evil, and educated in wickedness; that we might not remain the children of necessity and ignorance, but of choice and knowledge, and might obtain the remission of our sins which we had before committed, there is named upon him who hath chosen to be regenerated, and hath repented of his sins, the name of the Father, &c."

By this account the catechumens were sanctified by faith and repentance, and the exercises of prayer and fasting, before they receiv'd the baptismal remission. And that they were to shew they had not receiv'd the grace of conversion in vain, and were to give evidence of their sincere repentance and piety, is farther manifest from hence, that ecclesiastical censures were inflicted on them if they laps'd into gross and scandalous offences.

Thus it was decreed by the great council of *Nice*, *can. 14.* that "if any of the catechumens,
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“by whom they more especially mean the highest rank of them, had laps’d, they should be degraded to the class of hearers for three years; and after that be admitted to pray with the catechumens again.” Now I hope the judgment of this first general council, whose authority was always held in the greatest veneration, will have more regard paid to it by all orthodox christians; than the idle preachments of the crazy *Moravians*, or any of their fanatical disciples.

Let us next see what is the sense of our own Church in this point. Now does not she, in her Catechism, require of persons to be baptiz’d, *Repentance, whereby they forsake sin*, and consequently become holy and are sanctified, as well as Faith? Does not she, in her office for the baptism of adults, prescribe, that due care may be taken for their examination, whether they be sufficiently instructed in the principles of the Christian Religion; and that they may be exhorted to prepare themselves with prayers and fastings for the receiving of this holy sacrament? Does she not there declare, that God will favourably receive these present persons, *truly repenting*, and coming unto him by faith, and grant them remission of their sins, and bestow upon them the Holy Ghost? And does not she make them openly profess their repentance, and their pious resolutions of keeping God’s holy will and commandments, and walking in the same continually?

Besides, in many places both in her Homilies and Liturgy, too long to enumerate, she affirms conversion and repentance to be necessary for remission of sins, and reconciliation with God, which is the same thing as Justification, particularly in the Confession and Absolution in the Daily Service and Communion Office, and in the Communion, and in the Homily of Repentance. So that

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that the Clergy of our Church are fully vindicated, who teach, that some degree of Sanctification, wrought in us by the grace of God, goes before the first Justification; which Sanctification receives a great increase in baptism, when men are endow'd with a more ample measure of it, are more fully renew'd in the spirit of their minds, and more compleatly regenerated by the Holy Ghost, that they may be enabled to continue and preserve their Justification, till they are finally acquitted at the Day of Judgment.

In short, the true doctrine of our church is, that men are imperfectly sanctified before the baptismal Justification; and to deny this, is to calumniate her in the grossest manner, and make her contradict the scriptures.

To say that no Sanctification precedes Justification, is to say, that God, in direct opposition to his own attributes of wisdom, holiness and justice, remits the sins of impenitent sinners, and puts them into a state of salvation; and if so, then the clear consequence is, that he will actually save them: for it cannot admit of the least doubt, but that God will save those to whom he has given a right to salvation. Now you own he gives impenitent or un sanctified sinners a right to salvation, therefore it follows that he will save them. And thus if no sort of Sanctification is necessary before, neither can it be necessary after Justification, which is manifestly the very dregs of *Antinomianism*.

I have the charity to believe, indeed, you are not sensible of this wretched consequence; but that your doctrine here is agreeable with it, is but too evident. Indeed, in your sermon on *Salvation by Faith*, you seem to speak more consistently with truth: but this only shews the inconsistency of your notions, and that you can easily digest palpable contradictions.

2. You

2. You say, "They (meaning the Clergy) speak of our own holiness, or good works, as the cause of our Justification; or that *for the sake of which, on account of which* we are justified before God. You believe, neither our own holiness, nor good works, are any part of the cause of our Justification; but that the death and righteousness of Christ are the whole and sole cause of it; or that for the sake of which, on account of which we are justified before God."

Now here you would intimate, the Clergy generally assert, that our own holiness, or good works, are in part the *meritorious* cause of our Justification. But this, I take leave to say, is a mere slander, which you can never prove. If any have less accurately said, that our own holiness is the *cause* of our Justification, they mean undoubtedly no more, than that it is the condition or the cause without which God will not justify us. And if they have farther asserted, that for the sake of our holiness, or on account of it, we are justified before God, which are expressions not so proper and exact as they should be; no one can fairly interpret them to signify, that we are justified through the merit of our holiness, but only through it as part of the condition to be perform'd by us for the obtaining Justification.

You yourself acknowledge, we are justified or saved through faith; and suppose you had less cautiously express'd yourself, and said, that we are sav'd for the sake of, on account of, our faith, wouldn't you have thought yourself very injuriously dealt with, if any one had charg'd you with preaching up the *merit* of faith? Undoubtedly you would, and with reason. You are therefore too hasty in judging your brethren, who utterly disclaim this doctrine as much as you do.

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They believe, as well as you, that neither our holiness, nor our good works, are any part of the *meritorious* cause of our Justification, and that the active and passive righteousness of Christ is wholly and solely in it. But they likewise believe, and that rightly, that our inward holiness, and those inward good works of faith, repentance, hope and charity, and the like, to which we are excited by the preventing and assisting grace of God working in us, are necessarily requir'd to our Justification; which is more than you believe, who will allow no degree of Sanctification previous to Justification, in contradiction both to truth, and to your own doctrine in other places.

3. You affirm, " They speak of good works, as a condition of Justification, necessarily previous to it. You believe no good work can be previous to Justification, nor consequently a condition of it; but that we are justified (because till that hour ungodly, and therefore incapable of doing any good work) by faith alone, faith without works, faith, tho' producing all, yet including no good works."

Here you assert, they speak of good works as a condition of Justification, which is manifestly inconsistent with your assertion, that they speak of them, as part of the meritorious cause of them; and consequently by your own confession you charged them falsely before. But you believe no good work can be previous to Justification, nor consequently a condition of it. But, God be prais'd, this is no part of our church's belief, who has no where deliver'd such abominable doctrine. On the contrary, I have shewn before, that she teaches repentance as well as faith is previous to Justification.

And you clearly acknowledge the truth of this doctrine, in p. 10. of your sermon on *salvation by faith*:

faith: "In the same hour, *say you*, that Paul and Silas began to preach, the jailor repented, believ'd and was baptiz'd: as were three thousand by St Peter, on the day of Pentecost, who all repented and believed at his first preaching." If you will not hearken to the church, of which you reckon yourself a member, have some regard at least to your own words, and no longer deceive both yourself and your unhappy followers.

But you assign a reason, why no good work can be previous to Justification, nor consequently a condition, to wit, because we are justified, being till that hour ungodly, and therefore incapable of doing any good work. But pray are not the acts of faith, which men are moved to do by the divine grace, good works? Are not the several acts contain'd under the notion of repentance, good works? You own in this very place that faith is the condition of Justification. And you own likewise in the passage I have just now cited from your own sermon, that repentance is so too, With what Face then can you lay down that little less than blasphemous position, that the ungodly as such, that is, who neither heartily believe nor repent, (otherwise they are not properly ungodly, or incapable of doing any good work) are justified?

This is contrary to the plain words of scripture, where it is said, *Exod. xxiv. 7.* that God will by no means clear the guilty: And *Prov. xvii. 15.* He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, they both are an abomination to the Lord. And surely if God detests men, who thus confound good and evil, it is most impious to imagine that God patronizes such a vile practice by his own example. It contradicts those innumerable places of scripture, where repentance is made part of the condition for obtaining forgiveness of

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sins. It is repugnant to the divine justice and holiness, since it implies that God remits the sins of them, and consequently gives them a right to eternal life, who are not cleans'd from their vices, and in some sense made partakers of the divine nature.

These one would think are absurdities enough to overfet this scandalous position, which you might have learnt of the *Antinomians* at home, without giving yourself the fatigue of travelling to *Moravia*, to have an opportunity of talking with the nonsensical christian *David*, the carpenter, and of enjoying the blessing of hearing him preach, and vent these same wretched crudities, See 2d Journal, p. 54.

The text you found this your doctrine upon is, I suppose, *Rom. iv. 5.* "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that *justifieth the ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousness." But this is nothing to your purpose, the meaning of it being briefly this: If a reward was due to him that worketh by his own natural powers, without the assistance of the divine grace, then he might claim the reward not as coming from God's grace and goodness, but as strictly due to him: But in the case of *Abraham* it was not so. God in his calling and justifying him, who was ungodly, having been guilty of idolatry particularly, which was a very grievous crime, had no regard to any works of his done by his own strength; but to him not working in this manner, but believing on him that justifieth the sinner, who upon such belief repents and reforms his life, and obeys the divine will, his faith was accounted to him for righteousness.

Here then all sort of works are not excluded, but only pretended meritorious works, which exact the reward from God as a debt; and not such works

works as are perform'd in the strength of faith, which itself is the gift of God, and supposes that all good gifts come from God through the alone merits of Christ, and has an eye to grace, by virtue of which all works done in faith likewise must be effected. This faith which implies obedience without merit, was accounted to *Abraham* for strict and meritorious righteousness. And so likewise is the faith of all true believers, who walk in the steps of that faith of our father *Abraham*.

In the next place it appears, God does not justify the ungodly, continuing such as he was before his call; but he justifies the ungodly or sinner, having first believ'd, and thereupon repented and obey'd, as *Abraham* did. In short, God does not justify sinners absolutely, but such sinners, as our church expresses it, who truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel, such sinners as our blessed Saviour came into the world to save; and if he will not save those hereafter who are impenitent, undoubtedly neither will he pardon and absolve them here. Every child that has learnt his catechism in our church, knows the terms of the gospel-covenant, and I am sure ungodliness is no part of them; and I am sorry you should be so unhappy as to teach such doctrine.

But as good luck would have it, you in this very place do in some measure contradict yourself. "We are justified, *say you*, by faith alone, "faith without works, faith (tho' producing all, "yet) including no good work." I confess indeed this is very crudely express'd, and seems to contradict itself, as well as what you had before asserted. But first let me observe, that you grant we are justified by faith producing good works. It then follows, that faith producing all good works is the condition of Justification, even in your own

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sense. If so, then it must before Justification produce all inward good works at least, such as repentance, charity, &c. God mainly regarding the obedience of the heart, and requiring outward works only as there is opportunity for them.

To this description of justifying faith, which you have here given us, let me add what you say in p. 8. of your sermon on *salvation by faith*. There you tell us, in answer to an objection, "That to preach Salvation or Justification by faith only, is to preach against holiness and good works: It would indeed be so if we spake, as some do, of a faith which was *separate* from these. But we speak of a faith which it not so, but necessarily productive of all good works; and all holiness."

In your own opinion then, the faith by which we are justified, is a faith which necessarily produces holiness, and is not separate from it. If so, then it is not the single virtue of faith, but a complex thing made up of faith, consider'd distinctly, and holiness together, since holiness is part of the very idea and definition of it. Another consequence is, that holiness, and therefore sanctification, must necessarily precede Justification, let it be only for a few moments, because the faith which must precede Justification, cannot possibly be separate from it.

It follows thirdly, that holiness or good works must be a part of the condition of Justification, necessarily previous to it, for the same reason. And lastly it follows, that no ungodly person, incapable of doing any good work, is justified, but only such ungodly persons, or sinners, who are penitent, and sanctified by that faith from which holiness or good works are inseparable. Thus you see how consistent your scheme of principles are,

and

and what clear instructions your poor hearers are to expect from you.

But the most glaring contradiction of all is couch'd in these very words themselves, "We are justified by faith alone, faith without works, faith, tho' producing all, yet including no good work," as thus: These two propositions are plainly contradictory, "We are justified by faith alone, faith without works," and "We are justified by faith producing all good works;" for certainly faith producing all good works, is not faith alone, or faith without or separate from good works. It is likewise much the same contradiction to say, that *justifying faith produces all, and yet includes no good work*. Now if it necessarily produces all good works, and they cannot be separated from it, as you allow, then it can't subsist without good works, and consequently they belong to the very essence of it, and must be included in its very definition.

And thus, Sir, I have very plainly prov'd, that you have both many ways contradicted your own doctrine, and have likewise manifestly overturn'd it: and while you would, to gain a party, persuade your followers the Clergy teach false doctrine, you in the upshot teach the very same.

What a ridiculous thing then is it in you to go from one end of the nation to the other, lamenting the heresies of your brethren, and instilling into the minds of the people, that they are led into errors by their pastors; when the truth is, you are either perverting them with *Solifidian* and *Antinomian* blasphemies, to which some of your principles have an apparent tendency, or else involve the doctrines of Faith and Justification in such obscure and unintelligible terms, that it would conduce much more both to their instruction and salvation, if they would adhere to their own Guides, who explain

explain their duty to them clearly, and without any ambiguity, and leave you to ruminat upon these nice points, till you can speak and write more distinctly and accurately about them? But if you will neither forbear to preach, nor they to hear you, may not this sentence be applied to you, that you are a *blind leader of the blind*.

But you confidently appeal to the judgment of the church in her Articles and Homilies, and claim to yourselves that venerable authority. Now we as willingly subscribe to her doctrine as you possibly could do, and have the greatest reverence for her authority; and being fully convinc'd she has clearly determin'd on our side, I will endeavour to shew, that if you are not a stranger to her words, yet you are entirely so to the sense of them, which is quite opposite to what you would put upon them. Her XIth Article is, "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or *deservings*. Wherefore that we are justified by *faith only*, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is express'd in the Homily of Justification."

To this Homily then let us go for the true interpretation of this Article. And first, let us see what sort of faith that is, which every man must have as requisite to Justification. Why, the Homily expressly says, p. 13. (Ed. Oxon. 1683) that it is a *true and lively faith, and that this faith does not shut out repentance, hope, love, dread, and the fear of God, to be join'd with faith in every man that is justified*. Here then it is evident, that repentance, &c. are to be join'd with that faith which justifies, and consequently holiness precedes Justification.

In

In p. 15. there are these words: " Nevertheless
 " this sentence, that we be justified by faith only,
 " is not so meant of them, that the said justifying
 " faith is alone in man without true repentance,
 " hope, charity, dread, and the fear of God, at
 " any time and season." 'Tis plain, that such a
 faith as justifies, comprehends all these; and if a-
 dult persons have not this faith, they shall not be
 justified in baptism; neither if any fall into sin af-
 ter baptism shall they obtain God's grace and re-
 mission, unless they believe so as truly to repent
 and turn unfeignedly to him. Now this clearly
 contradicts your doctrine which I have been al-
 ready confuting.

But you will say, if this be the case, how are
 we justified by *faith only*, as the Article expresses
 it? To this I answer, in the very Words of the
 Homily, " that we be justified by faith only, free-
 ly, and without works, is spoken to take away
 " clearly all *merit* of our works, as being unable
 " to deserve our Justification at God's hands.—
 " And because no man should err, by mistaking
 " of this doctrine, I shall plainly and shortly de-
 " clare the understanding of the same.—First you
 " shall understand, that in our Justification by
 " Christ, it is not all one thing, the office of God
 " unto man, and the office of man unto God.
 " Justification is not the office of man, but of
 " God; for man cannot make himself righteous
 " by his own works, neither in part nor in whole.
 " —But Justification is the Office of God only,
 " and is not a thing which we render unto him,
 " but which we receive of him; not which we
 " give to him, but which we take of him, by his
 " free mercy, and by the *only merits* of his most
 " dearly beloved son.

" So that the true understanding of this doctrine,
 " *We be justified truly by faith without works, or*
 " *that*

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“ *that we be justified by faith in Christ only*, is not
 “ that this our own act to believe in Christ, or
 “ this our faith in Christ, which is within us, doth
 “ justify us, and *deserve* our Justification unto us
 “ (for that were to count ourselves to be justified
 “ by some act or virtue that is within ourselves)
 “ but the true understanding and meaning thereof
 “ is, that altho’ we hear God’s Word and believe
 “ it, altho’ we have faith, hope, charity, repentance,
 “ dread and fear of God within us, and do never
 “ so many good works thereunto: yet we must
 “ renounce the *merit* of all our said virtues of
 “ faith, hope, charity, and all other virtues and
 “ good deeds, which we either have done, shall do,
 “ or can do, as things that are far too weak and
 “ insufficient, and imperfect, to *deserve* remission
 “ of our sins and our Justification; and therefore
 “ we must trust only in God’s mercy, and that
 “ Sacrifice, which our High-Priest and Saviour
 “ Jesus Christ, the Son of God, once offered for us
 “ upon the Cross, to obtain thereby (to wit, by
 “ *that sacrifice*) God’s grace and remission, as well
 “ of our original sin in Baptism, as of actual sin
 “ committed by us after our Baptism, if we truly
 “ repent and turn unfeignedly to him again.

“ So that—as great and as goodly a virtue as
 “ the lively faith is, yet it putteth us from itself,
 “ and remitteth or appointeth us to Christ, for to
 “ have only by him remission of sins, or Justifica-
 “ tion. So that our faith in Christ as it were,
 “ faith unto us thus, It is not I that take away
 “ your sins, but it is Christ only, and to him only
 “ I send you for that purpose, forsaking therein
 “ all your good virtues, words, thoughts, and
 “ works, and only putting your trust in Christ.”

And p. 17. “ Truth it is, that our own works
 “ don’t justify us, to *speak properly* of our Justifi-
 “ cation, that is to say, our works do not *merit*
 “ or

“ or *deserve* remission of our sins, and make us,
 “ of unjust, just before God: but God, of his
 “ own mercy, through the merits and deservings
 “ of his son Jesus Christ, doth justify us. Never-
 “ theless, because faith doth directly send us to
 “ Christ for remission of our sins, and that by
 “ faith given us of God we embrace the promise
 “ of God’s mercy, and of the remission of our
 “ sins, (which thing none other of our virtues or
 “ works properly doth) therefore the Scripture
 “ useth to say, that faith without works doth ju-
 “ stify. — And because all this is brought to pass
 “ through the only *merits* and *deservings* of our
 “ Saviour Christ, and not through our merits, or
 “ through the *merits* of any virtue that we have
 “ within us, or any work that cometh from us;
 “ therefore in that respect of *merit* and *deserving*,
 “ we forsake as it were altogether again faith,
 “ works, and all other virtues.”

From which words these things following may
 clearly be gather’d: that it is the office of God
 only to justify through his free grace and mercy:
 that Christ’s sacrifice, once offer’d upon the cross
 for us, is the only meritorious cause of our Justi-
 fication: that though faith, join’d with repentance,
 charity, &c. are requisite on our parts, in order
 to our pardon and salvation, yet they are too
 mean and imperfect to deserve any thing at God’s
 hand, and therefore we are to ascribe the merit of
 our Justification to Christ only, and renounce the
 merit of our faith, and all other graces united with
 it: that we are said to be justified by *faith only*,
 not that faith, more than any other grace, is a
 mean or condition of our Justification, for they
 must all be join’d in that respect; but purely be-
 cause faith alone, among all the other graces and
 virtues, directly points, and has respect to the me-
 rits of Christ’s sacrifice, by which alone we deserve
 all

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all the promises of the Gospel: that therefore to say we are justified by *faith alone*, is, properly speaking, the same thing in effect as to say, we are justified by the alone merits of Christ, to whom faith directly sends us for the remission of our sins: that consequently this expression, *We are justified by faith alone*, is not proper but figurative, being a metonymy, where the act of faith is put for the object about which it is conversant, to wit, the free grace and mercy of God promis'd thro' the merits of Christ: that, lastly, it is very fit to retain this form of speaking, because it hinders all human merits from having any share in the matter of Justification; and *we use it*, as our Church speaks, *in the humbling of ourselves to God, and to give all the glory to our Saviour Christ, who is best worthy to have it.*

This is the sum of our Church's doctrine, design'd to overturn the Popish doctrine of the merit of good works; but by no means intended to oppose the necessity of them, as a condition requir'd of those who shall be justified, or to countenance the *Solifidian* error, which you seem too much to lean to, when you assert, that we are justified by the single virtue of faith alone, not including any good work; a doctrine of very dangerous consequence, which all your exhortations to piety and a good life, can never sanctify or correct.

If this be the doctrine you blame us for opposing, you may assure yourself we will do it with all our might; we will leave no stone unturn'd as far as arguments will go, to vindicate the doctrine of our Church from misinterpretations, and ourselves, who have the honour to defend it, from calumnies: and while you make your utmost efforts to poison the flock, it is our indispensable duty, by God's assistance, to provide a suitable antidote. Justification by faith then means no more than

than our being justified by the grace of God thro' the alone merits of Christ; which grace and mercy is apprehended by faith, and applied to us by virtue of God's promise, upon our performing the condition requir'd.

It is plain from the Homily, this phrase does not exclude the condition prescrib'd in the gospel covenant, which is such a faith as is made effectual by love, or such a faith as comprehends the obedience of the heart; for if it did, it would exclude even faith itself, which is manifestly absurd. Now this expression of Justification by faith only, being by many much misunderstood, and having been the unhappy occasion of endless controversies, though when rightly apply'd against the doctrine of merit, it is a way of speaking very proper, and so is easy to be defended in the good sense in which the church uses it; yet our divines have commonly disus'd it, on account of the bad meaning in which the *Antinomians*, and the like sectaries, have understood it, and have chose to explain the same doctrine in other plainer and less exceptionable terms.

This is the case; and from hence it is, that the *Methodists* have taken an unjust occasion to vilify us, and to assert, with so much confidence and falshood, we have deserted the principles of the reformation. But after all your tragical outcries, I fear it will at length be found you are the men that have really done so, having imposed a sense upon the Articles and Homilies, which is directly contrary to their true meaning, as I hope I have clearly shewn.

4. You say, the clergy speak of Sanctification or holiness as an outward thing. This, I must tell you, is a mere slander. They plead as much for inward holiness, as any body of men whatever: and moreover they contend for it, (which is

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more than you do) as previous to the first Justification; and likewise urge, that it ought to be continued in, and augmented by our diligently using all the means of grace, and co-operating with the grace of God, and the influences of his holy spirit, to the end of our lives, in order to preserve our Justification till God shall finally pardon our souls at our departure hence, and consummate our remission at the resurrection of the just, which is our second Justification. And if, during our continuance in this world, we fall into deadly sin after baptism, they teach, that we must inwardly believe and repent, that God, upon our prayer to him, and the receiving of the blessed sacrament, may renew our Justification, in the same manner as he bestow'd it upon us at first. This is the doctrine they universally inculcate, and which, tho' you would never so fain, you cannot oppose, without contradicting the scriptures, and the judgment of our church.

5. You say, they speak of the new birth as an outward thing, as if it were no more than baptism, by which you must mean outward baptism only. This likewise is absolutely false; as I have shewn in my former letter: and indeed you must look upon the clergy as the merest dolts in nature, who neither understand the very catechetical doctrine they learnt in their infancy, nor the church's office of baptism, which they so frequently use.

Consider then, Sir, how wicked and abominable in the sight of God it is for you to misrepresent your brethren to the people, in this scandalous manner. Reflect at length, if upon this account your conscience never check'd you before, that they do indeed speak the truth, as it is in Jesus, much more than you do; and that, to use your own words, since they do so, you are *found a false witness before God.* Repent therefore of this thy wickedness,

ness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee; for I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

In your late *Earnest Appeal*, &c. you endeavour to set off your principles and practises to the best advantage. And I confess it is very well calculated to work upon and move the affections of the People; but all your strongest perquisites to the love of God, and to inward religion, will not blanch over the deformity of that doctrine, which assures men they may be justified or pardon'd without being at all sanctified, or by faith alone, which is exclusive of charity and obedience. Unless you publickly recant this horrid doctrine, your faith is vain, and your preaching not only fruitless, but dangerous, and which all pious christians are bound to detest.

And if you will vouchsafe to purge out this venomous part of your principles, in which the *wide, essential, fundamental, irreconcilable difference*, as you very justly term it, mainly consists; then there will be found so far no disagreement between you and the clergy of the Church of *England*. You will in this respect preach the very same doctrines; but then, which will be hard for a man of your high spirit to submit to, you must return to your former private station, and no longer make such a figure and bustle in the world; since there will be no farther occasion for you to travel about preaching these saving truths, for that the people may, if they please, be fully instructed in them by their own pastors, who in their discourses insist upon inward piety and holiness, and the duties of a christian correspondent thereto, as much as you do.

But the mischief is, the giddy multitude, like the *Athenians*, love to spend their time in nothing
C 2 else

else but hearing some new thing. They are tired with the solid, plain and rational way of preaching they have been accustom'd to in the church, and think it dry and insipid in comparison of the powerful charms of that extatick eloquence, those high flown metaphors, those pretty rhymes, those taking actions and gestures, with which you tickle and bewitch them. These things play upon and affect their fancy a little for the present, but their minds are not a whit more convinc'd by the evidence of any truth, than if they heard it press'd upon them by their proper teachers, when hearken'd to with that meekness, humility, and obedience, which is due from the people to their spiritual guides.

To several things which you have strongly enforc'd in your *Appeal*, I have nothing to object, only the disorderly and uncharitable manner of doing it, and the inconsistency of them with some of your principles. We all contend, and God forbid we should not, as much as you do, for inward vital religion, and endeavour to persuade men, as much as in us lies, that no outward acts of devotion whatever avail any thing without it; and to labour with all their might, as far as the imperfection of their nature will permit, to keep all the commandments of God, and strive to attain the utmost perfection.

This we all agree with you in, and frequently urge with the most powerful arguments upon the minds and consciences of our hearers. And if you affirm we do not, what else can be said, but that you are a false accuser? We have therefore no need of your assistance upon this account; and you have nothing left to do, but to ask God pardon for all the grievous slanders you have cast upon us, to go back to your college, and study to be quiet and mind your own business. But
tho'

tho' I gladly commend some parts of your book, yet there are others which require some animadversions.

1. You are much delighted with gay figures, which, without explaining them, are too obscure for vulgar readers to apprehend; and you are, I dare say, as much a barbarian to them, as if you wrote in an unknown tongue. I don't believe every tenth person in your congregation understands (for instance) what you say in your 17th page about *internal sensation*.

All you can mean by it is, that using all the means of instruction, such as reading the scriptures, and hearing them explain'd, and the like, will not be sufficient to make them understand the meaning of faith, and rightly apprehend the several things to which they are to give their assent; such as, the person of Christ; the design of his coming into the world, which was to establish and confirm a new covenant, that man, upon gracious conditions, may be reconcil'd to God, and brought to eternal happiness; the merit of his obedience and suffering; the infinite blessings procur'd for us by his resurrection and intercession in heaven; the precepts which he and his apostles have deliver'd to the world, which we are to observe as the condition of the gospel-covenant; the promises we are firmly to rely upon in the performance of our duty; and the punishments which will be inflicted, if we neglect or violate it: I say, the using all the means which we have naturally in our power, will be insufficient to make us to understand these things, so as that they shall be effectual to our salvation, unless God, by his special grace preventing us, does prepare and dispose our minds to have a right and just notion of them, and continually assist our wills in performing those matters of practice to which we assent.

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For who doubts, but that *we are not sufficient of ourselves so much as to think any thing as of ourselves, and that our sufficiency is of God; and that the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned?* It is the sole work of grace to correct the perverseness of our natural and carnal reason, and to enlighten our minds to make us capable of clearly understanding the arguments the gospel produces for persuading us to embrace the faith, and to have a true perception of all the objects of it express'd in the scriptures, and of the strict obligation it lays us under to repent and obey all the precepts of Christ. This is all that can be understood by what you term internal sensation; and if you mean any thing else, if you mean especially, as some do, a perception caus'd by some extraordinary gift of the holy ghost, suppose, by immediate revelation, I can only say you are miserably mistaken.

2. You say, p. 30. it is urg'd as an objection, that you preach salvation by faith alone. To which you answer, And does not St Paul do the same? To which it may be replied, and does not St James tell us, *It does not profit, tho' a man say he hath faith, and hath not works, and faith cannot save him: faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone?* Now if St Paul is seemingly for you, 'tis manifest St James, is plainly on our side. How then are these two inspir'd writers to be reconciled? Not surely by saying, that the word *faith* in St Paul means the single grace of faith consider'd barely in contradistinction to all other virtues and good works, as it does in St James; but that it contains and implies all other virtues, which spring from it as their root, and does not exclude all other holy duties, but only the merit
of

of them, by evidencing that as itself is the gift of God, so are they too; and therefore there is no ground for boasting.

St Paul's is a *faith made perfect by love*, which is the same thing as St James's *faith made perfect by works*. It is a faith then consider'd in the most intense and consummate degree, and not barely consider'd with regard to the solitary essence of it. In this way the two apostles don't jar with each other; any other method makes St Paul contradict not only the other apostles, but even himself, and consequently cannot be right.

That he would contradict himself, I have in part shewn already; and that obedience of heart and life to the commands of the gospel, as well as an assent of the understanding to the truth of the gospel-revelation, and a trusting and relying upon the merits of Christ, is included in his notion of faith, will farther appear to any one who will consider these texts. *Rom. i. 5. By whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for his name*; where the belief of the gospel is call'd the *obedience of faith*. *Rom. x. 16. But they have not all obeyed the gospel, for Isaiah saith, Lord who hath believed our report?* But if faith doth not include obedience, how could he prove there were some that did not obey the gospel, because *Isaiah said, There were some that did not believe it?*

And so likewise by comparing *1 Tim. iv. 10*, where our Lord is said to be *the Saviour of them that believe*; with *Heb. v. 9*. where he is said to be the *author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him*. And also by comparing *Gal. v. 6*. where it is said, *For in Jesus Christ, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love*; with *1 Cor. vii. 12. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing,*
but

but the keeping of the commandments of God. It were easy to shew, that both in *St Paul*, and in other scriptures there are several texts, where unbelief and disobedience are equivalently us'd. But this may suffice to demonstrate the apostle's true meaning.

Well, but *St Paul* says, *By grace ye are saved through faith.* True, but then *faith* does not mean here that grace especially so called, but includes also the obedience which grows from it, as from the beginning and the root thereof. This lively, practical *faith* is *the gift of God*, we have it *not of ourselves*, for *in us dwelleth naturally no good thing*, and God and his grace does all; *neither is it of works*, which we do by our natural strength, exclusive of the divine grace. Every good thing we have is owing to this, *lest any man should boast of the merit of his holiness*, ascribing that, which belongs only to grace, to our own will.

But there is not the least room for glorying: For, as the apostle goes on, *We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that we should walk in them.* We are formed a-new by God in Christ, and therefore we have no being, life, subsistence, or motion towards that which is good; but only in him, and by his spirit and grace. We are brought by God out of a state of perfect inability, from which he alone can remove us, and from which we cannot possibly deserve to be remov'd, that we may be enabled to do those good works which always accompany a perfect *faith*, to which he hath before prepar'd us by his pure mercy, and which he continually does in us by his mighty power.

It is plain then that the *good works which we are created unto in Christ, that we should walk in them*, are always in *St Paul's* judgment join'd with *faith*.

And

And therefore we are not saved by faith alone, taken in a sense exclusive of good works, as you falsely teach. The merit of good works is excluded, but not themselves. *Can any words be more express*—against you? You cite another text altogether as impertinent as this: *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, Acts xvi. 31.* For here the word, *believe*, does not signify the grace, or the acts of faith only, but is a metonymy, where the cause is named, but wherein also the genuine effect and natural consequence is comprehended. A firm and solid faith necessarily produces charity and repentance, and therefore these in the word, *believe*, are by no means excluded from it, but express'd by it, and implied in it.

In scripture sometimes faith, which is the cause of all other graces, sometimes charity, sometimes repentance, which is the effect of faith, is only mention'd; but each of these words are not always to be understood of that one single virtue, but must frequently so be interpreted as to contain the whole duty of a christian. Thus St Paul to the Jews at Antioch, — *Be it known unto you therefore, that through this man is preach'd unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.* Here believing cannot signify faith exclusive of repentance, but such a faith as includes it, as necessary for the obtaining Justification, or the forgiveness of sins; it being unquestionable, that God only justifies or forgives penitent believers. And St Paul declares, that repentance is a necessary qualification of a true convert, as well as faith: *He shew'd first unto them at Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet*
for

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for repentance: And Christ sent him to open their Eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith which is in me.

You see here they are previously sanctified before they are justified, by faith effectual to work repentance, and to free men from infidelity and sin, and slavery, under the dominion of the devil, and no other faith, not mere solitary faith, as you would have it, can be a condition of Justification, or of forgiveness of sins, and having a right by God's goodness to the heavenly inheritance.

Thus it is plain *Acts* xiii. 21. is of no service to you. *Believe*, says *St Paul* to the jailor, that is, believe and repent, *and thou shalt be saved.* Then *Paul* and *Silas* spake unto him the word of the Lord, open'd to him the terms of the gospel, convinc'd him of the necessity of believing in Christ, and forsaking his sins. Then the man, to shew that he did so, and that his faith was made perfect by charity, like a true convert to the religion of love, kindly took them the same hour of the night, and wash'd their stripes; and thus prepar'd, he and all his were baptiz'd straitway, and so were justified, or, by the ministration of that blessed sacrament, receiv'd remission of sins. Hence it is likewise manifest, that not only faith and repentance, but baptism also, when it may be had, is necessary for Justification and Salvation: which is notoriously the doctrine of the Church of *England*, but I cannot perceive it is yours.

You admit of no conditional cause of Justification, but faith alone, not repentance, not charity or any other grace, not the profession of christianity which we made at our baptism, altho' *St Peter* ascribes our salvation to it, and *St Paul* says, that not only *with the heart a man believeth unto righteousness,*

teousness, but with the mouth also confession is made unto salvation, viz. a publick and voluntary confession, that they all resolv'd to live and die christians, and to take up the cross, and forego all worldly advantages for the sake of the gospel: such a penitential confession as many that believed made, who coming to St Paul, confess'd and shew'd their deeds; such also as many of them made, who us'd curious arts, and bringing their books together, burnt them before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it no less than fifty thousand pieces of silver.

But you exclude every thing of this sort, as seals and proofs of true conversion; they cannot, as you contend, be any part of the conditional cause of our Justification; and you strenuously affirm, that we are sav'd from our sins *only* by a confidence in the love of God. But let me ask you, Does this precede, or follow, Justification? If the latter, then it is not a condition of Justification at all, much less the only one: then too we are justified without any previous condition; for if it is not so, and in your opinion nothing else can be, our sins are forgiven without our performing any thing to obtain forgiveness, which is the highest absurdity. If it precedes Justification, then how can it be, as you in many places declare, such a sure trust as a man hath in God, that his sins *are* forgiven, or that he is already justified.

This, good sir, give me leave to say, is the greatest nonsense and contradiction possible. According to you, it is a condition, and no condition; it is any thing, or nothing, as you please. In short, it is impossible you can understand this jargon yourself, and therefore you labour in vain to make it intelligible to others. You *soar aloft on Eagle's wings*, and leave the poor people to gape and stare after you.

Your

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Your hypothesis is, that first our sins are forgiven; that God is first reconcil'd to us; and then, that we have this sure trust and confidence in the love of God. But where pray are we taught, either in holy scriptures, or by our common mother the Church of *England*, that we are justified or pardon'd, and made inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, before we are first converted, and sanctified by faith and repentance, and make a publick profession thereof? I have look'd as narrowly as I could, and cannot find it. Nay, is it not contrary to plain scripture, and to the church's authentick monuments, to assert, that God pardons and saves unbelieving and impenitent sinners? Is it not indeed the foulest error, I had almost said, the highest blasphemy?

In the next place, if we are sav'd *only* by a confidence in the love and mercy of God, how will you distinguish this sole confidence of yours from that of the *Antinomian* hereticks, who make as high pretences to it as you can possibly do? Will you say, that the love of God, and all christian graces, are necessarily join'd to this confidence? That cannot be, because then we are not sav'd *only* by such a confidence: then we are sav'd by other graces and good works, as well as by that, which is directly contrary to your hypothesis, unless to be sav'd *only*, and not *only*, by that, be the same thing.

In order to prove we are pardon'd first, and then we have this confidence, by which alone we are sav'd from our sins, you tack two sentences of St *John's* 1st Epistle together, which I cannot understand how they are at all to your purpose.

The first sentence is, *Behold, what manner of love the father hath bestow'd upon us*, to which you should have added, *that we should be called the sons of God*, 1 *John*, iii. 1. He bids us attentively, and
with

with grateful hearts, consider the great love and mercy of God in calling us to be his sons, and bestowing upon us the privileges belonging to such. What then? Does it follow we are made the sons of God without a previous conversion to him by faith and repentance, and that our sins are first forgiven without any condition, and that then we must have a sole trust and confidence in his love? A man must be an *OEdipus*, who can find out such a riddle in this text.

The other sentence is: *We must love him, because he first loved us*; That is, tho' we were sinners, and God's enemies, yet out of mercy to us, and a preventing love, God sent his only son into the world to suffer and die as a victim for all mankind, and to redeem us from sin, by purchasing for us grace and salvation, tho' we did not deserve it at his hands. By which grace we are turn'd to God through faith and repentance, and have our sins pardon'd, and are enabled to persevere in our justified state. And therefore we are bound to return the tribute of our love and gratitude, and to obey him faithfully as long as we live.

Now how this makes for you, and against us, is past my skill to imagine. Does it hence follow that we are not to love God before our justification, as well as after we are in that happy state? Or that we are sav'd from our sins only by a confidence in the love of God, and not also by charity and obedience, which are the blessed effects of his grace and love?

In good truth, Sir, your sole condition of our being justified is not prov'd from hence, but the contrary. St *John* frequently urges keeping God's commandments and obedience, as our christian duty; but all we are oblig'd to according to your absurd notion is, to fix strongly in our fancy a

firm and undoubted assurance that God has actually given us a pardon, though we are yet in our sins, and without any act of ours to obtain it.

This alone is the state of salvation you would preach the world into: And all your other exhortations to piety and a good life are altogether unnecessary upon your grounds. For if faith and repentance are not necessary before Justification, it can never be prov'd, they are afterwards so. I am afraid many of your hearers, if they don't already, will see this consequence plainly enough, and therefore it is very fit it should be clearly laid open, and the principle from which it naturally follows, fully confuted; and this I hope I have sufficiently done.

Your brethren indeed, whom you seem so heartily to pity, but in truth most uncharitably despise, are wont to tell their people from the pulpit, that before we can be justified, and be in a state of salvation, we must first firmly assent to all the truths revealed in the gospel; from this assent follows a trust in God's promises: and if this trust be made effectual in us by the grace of God, then we must seriously apply ourselves to perform the condition of those promises, by repenting of our sins, by a firm purpose of obedience, by devoting ourselves entirely to Christ; lastly, by performing the condition we have a solid ground to hope for the thing promised, our Justification and Salvation.

Thus our trust and hope are a spring of industry and good endeavours, push us eagerly on to do our duty, and make us vigorously resolve to procure thereby, what is not to be got without it, being sensible, that God never intends to reward an unactive and careless confidence, but such only as is industrious and obedient. This is very intelligible and true, and far different from your inexplicable and dangerous notion. Now this is
not

not an absolute confidence in the mercy and promises of God, but a conditional one, by which a man trusts, that according to the promises of the gospel he will attain pardon and salvation through Christ, if he performs the condition of obtaining remission prescrib'd in the scriptures.

This goes before Justification, and does not only follow it as your's does. This is efficacious towards the amendment of our lives, but your's does not necessarily conduce to that great end. This contains and implies obedience as its undoubted consequence, your's has no real connexion with it. You endeavour indeed to piece them together with untemper'd mortar, but a careful eye can easily discern the one has no strict coherence with the other.

For your sure trust and confidence is plac'd after Justification, and before all obedience, which is a very impious doctrine, because it supposes not only that we are pardon'd, altho' impenitent, but also that we are sav'd before we have fulfilled the terms of salvation. *We must first, say you, have an absolute assurance that we are pardon'd and put into a state of salvation, and then we love God and our neighbour, &c.* that is, performing the condition of our being in a state of salvation afterwards, which is plainly ridiculous and absurd.

You would gladly father your doctrine upon our church; and have strangely misapplied some passages in the Homilies to make them favour your purpose, but you only wrest these as you do the scriptures to your own destruction. But before I prove this, let me correct a point of chronology, wherein you are a little mistaken. You say it appears more than probable, that the very design of the council of *Trent*, in its sixth session, was to anathematize the doctrine of the Church of *England* contain'd in her homilies. But this is im-

possible: For the decrees of the sixth session were publish'd on the 13th of *January* 1547, which was a little before King *Edward* the sixth came to the crown.

Now every body knows, that knows any thing of history, that the first book of homilies was not compos'd till after that King began his reign, and was not publish'd by the King's Visitors till about *August* 1547. I may likewise observe, that you affirm the council of *Trent* has decreed, "If any man hold (*fiduciam*) trust, confidence, or assurance of pardon to be essential to faith, let him be accurs'd." Now I don't find any such words in the canons of that council. These indeed are the words of its twelfth canon: "If any man shall say, that justifying faith is nothing else but a confidence in the divine mercy remitting sins for Christ's sake, or that this confidence is, that alone, by which we are justifi'd, let him be accurs'd."

This, Sir, I am sure is true doctrine, whoever say it, and is perfectly agreeable to the doctrine of our church, which does not make Justification consist in this confidence alone, exclusive of other virtues and good works as you do; but according to her this trust and confidence must be join'd and accompany'd with all other graces, otherwise it is not a lively faith, and we are not justified by it at all. And so you are not only anathematiz'd by the council of *Trent*, but also condemn'd by our own church. I have made this observation, because it shews how inaccurate you are in your citations and remarks, and what little reason your people have to rely upon you.

But to come to the doctrines of the homilies. I have shewn already, that the church's phrase, *we are justified by faith only*, is not to be understood to exclude all other graces from being the condition

tion of Justification, as you, manifestly perverting the church's words in her homily of salvation, vehemently contend. I shall now endeavour to shew the true meaning of some words towards the end of the third part of that homily, which you misconstrue in a most strange manner. In this place it teaches what is the duty of christians *after we are baptiz'd or justified*, and what we are to do to preserve our Justification, and so in the end obtain everlasting life.

Now it does not instruct us, that we must save ourselves from sin, or from the guilt and punishment, and power, of it, *only* by a confidence in the love of God, which is your absurd doctrine. It teaches us no such idle ineffective confidence, which many most reprobate sinners think they have, and congratulating themselves in it, continue in a wicked and damnable state, and even die in their iniquity, still dreaming that they are sav'd from their sins in the way you prescribe, and thus greedily embracing the promises, and having no regard to the precepts of the gospel.

But our church holds no such scandalous and disgraceful opinion. She asserts, that as we are justified or pardon'd upon our having a lively faith, which is not without hope and trust in God, not without the love of God, and of our neighbours, nor without the fear of God, nor without the desire to hear God's word, and to follow the same in eschewing evil, and doing gladly all good works, as opportunity offers: So in order to preserve ourselves in a justified state, we are not only to believe that holy scripture, and all the articles of the christian faith, are true, " but also to have a sure
" trust and confidence in God's merciful promi-
" ses, to be sav'd from everlasting damnation by
" Christ, whereof doth follow a loving heart to
" obey his commandments. And this true chris-

“*man faith neither any devil hath, nor yet any*
 “*man, which — seemeth to be a christian man,*
 “*and yet in his living and deeds sheweth the con-*
 “*trary.*

“*For how can a man have this true faith, this*
 “*sure trust and confidence, that through the me-*
 “*rits of Christ his sins be forgiven, and he recon-*
 “*ciled to the favour of God, and to be partaker*
 “*of the kingdom of heaven by Christ, when he*
 “*liveth ungodly, and denieth Christ in his deeds?*
 “*Surely no such ungodly man can have this faith*
 “*and trust in God. For as they know Christ to*
 “*be the only saviour of the world; so they know*
 “*also that wicked men shall not enjoy the king-*
 “*dom of God.” So that we are not to have on-*
 “*ly the sure trust and confidence in God’s mercy,*
 “*you speak of, but also such a sure trust as is at-*
 “*tended with all other virtues, and all holy con-*
 “*versation and godliness of life.*

A man may have all you require, to wit, a *sole* confidence in the merits of Christ, and yet be a very wicked man; but he can’t have such a trust, as the church requires, which is not a solitary, but a complex thing, not only composed of a firm trust in God’s promises, but also of all other graces and good works, which are included in it, as the necessary effects thereof. Such a faith or trust, is not faith alone, but obedience too, and this will undoubtedly continue us in God’s favour, and make us at length partakers of the kingdom of heaven. But too many, God knows, have gone into eternal misery, who have follow’d your rule of depending only on God’s mercy, without doing what he commands in order to obtain it.

According to the church, it is impossible any man can have the true faith and trust in God she recommends, who has not also a loving heart to obey his commandments, and unless he has this
 entire

entire complex thing, and not only a bare exclusive confidence; unless he has *this* true faith, *this* sure trust and confidence in God's universal promise, that by the merits of Christ who hath satisfied for all men, his sins also in particular are satisfied for, he will never be partaker of the kingdom of heaven. 'Tis evident therefore this is not a confidence that any particular man's sins are actually forgiven, and he reconciled to God; but only as the 17th article expresses it, a receiving or trusting in God's promises in such wise as they be generally set forth in holy scripture, and withal a practising answerably thereto.

The homily then is thus to be understood, "We must have a sure trust and confidence in God's general promises of grace and mercy, that Christ by the sacrifice of his death has redeemed all mankind, and consequently every man in particular, and has pardoned and reconciled every one to God, or by his merits purchas'd pardon and reconciliation for him, who lives up to the precepts of the gospel. This trust must be attended with charity and obedience, and this no wicked man can have, so as to have any comfort or benefit by it, without fulfilling the practical part of it." This is the meaning, and this alone, of our Church's affirming, that no wicked man can have this sure trust and confidence: For no one can be interpreted to have this faith, which is made the condition of our acceptance, but he who is acted by it, and his works are obedient.

It is not a faith or trust merely seated in the understanding, but also effectually works upon our will and affections, and under the influences of divine grace is the very fundamental cause and natural spring of all our christian service and obedience: And though a wicked man may have the speculative part of this trust really in the mind,

yet

yet he has it not in a *moral* and *salutary* sense, and consequently cannot be said to have it in a true christian sense at all. For no confidence in God's mercy can be said to avail us to bliss, but that which affects and produces the amendment of our lives.

And that it is a lively, vigorous, and effective trust in God's general promise of pardon and reconciliation through Christ, and not an absolute confidence in God's special mercy, by which a man believes that pardon is already granted to him in particular, is plain from what follows in the homily, where Christ is said to be the only saviour of the world; and where the universal benefits procured to all men by Christ's sacrifice are enumerated: and where it is said, that these great and merciful benefits of God, if they be well consider'd — move us to render ourselves unto God wholly — to serve him in all good deeds, obeying his commandments during our lives, &c.

And thus you have no ground from these sentences partially cited out of the homily of *salvation* to affirm, that the true christian faith is a sure confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ his sins in particular are actually forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God. 'Tis true, it is here meant, every particular man's sins are forgiven as to the atonement and satisfaction made for them by Christ, and he is so far reconcil'd to the favour of God; but there is no intention to express the special application of the atonement to any person, as I have fully shewn. This then is not the object of our trust or faith, and nothing else here is so but God's general promise of universal redemption through Christ, which every good and faithful christian must receive and confide in, and if he do so heartily, will do his utmost to share in.

You

You say, we are sav'd from the power of our sins only by a confidence in the love of God. But we can't be so sav'd only by such a confidence; for this confidence alone, and by itself, without a loving heart to obey God's commandments, will not save us either from the guilt or power of sin. And if you say, you don't mean *only* by such a confidence, then 'tis plain you are turn'd aside to vain jangling, desiring to be a teacher, and yet understanding neither what you say, nor whereof you affirm. In short, you seem to me to be wonderfully perplex'd, and got into an inextricable labyrinth. But now the trust or confidence the church speaks of, has no difficulty or obscurity in it; it is clearly an operative trust, and being join'd with charity, will undoubtedly save us from our sins, by freeing us from the dominion of them.

This is the doctrine which your despised brethren preach. But this you are not content with, and nothing will go down with you, or please the spiritual palate of your hearers, but what has no sense or reason in it. The more profound and intricate your notions are, the more you admire yourself, and are admir'd by them.

To make it still the more apparent, that the church means, by a sure trust in God's merciful promises, a confidence in the general promises, and not a persuasion that any special mercy is granted absolutely to a particular person, I shall add her own words in the first part of the sermon of *faith*, p. 21. "The very pure and lively christian faith
" is, not only to believe all things of God which
" are contain'd in holy scripture, but also is an
" earnest trust and confidence in God, that he
" doth regard us, that he is careful over us, as
" the father is over the child whom he doth love,
" and that he will be merciful unto us for his
" only

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“ only son’s sake, and that we have our Saviour
 “ Christ our perpetual advocate and priest, in
 “ whose only merits, oblation and suffering, we
 “ do trust that our offences be continually wash’d
 “ and purg’d, whensoever we, repenting truly, do
 “ return to him with our whole heart, stedfastly
 “ determining with ourselves, through his grace,
 “ to obey and serve him in keeping his command-
 “ ments, and never to turn back again to sin.

“ Such is the true faith that the scripture doth
 “ so much commend; the which when it seeth
 “ and considereth what God hath done for us, is
 “ also mov’d through continual assistance of the
 “ spirit of God, to serve and please him, to keep
 “ his favour, to fear his displeasure, to continue
 “ his obedient children, shewing thankfulness a-
 “ gain, by keeping his commandments, and that
 “ freely, for true love chiefly, and not for dread
 “ of punishment, or love of temporal reward,
 “ considering how clearly, and without deservings,
 “ we have receiv’d his mercy and pardon freely.”

’Tis evident this is a faith or trust in the general promises of pardon and salvation through the merits of Christ, whose sacrifice offer’d, and intercession made for all, will be available to those who come up to the terms prescrib’d in the gospel. But this is not a confidence or absolute assurance, that Christ has actually pardon’d any particular person. ’Tis only a confidence in God, that every man’s sins are pardon’d, and he will be finally sav’d, if he has liv’d, and shall live, according to his christian profession. ’Tis a confidence, that, by the merits of Christ, and what he hath done for us, God doth save all penitent and obedient christians; and not that any particular man is absolutely in a state of salvation, for he can only be conditionally in that state, *viz.* if he repent and obey: and none can be infallibly sure he

does

does so, unless by immediate revelation; therefore the special mercy granted to any man, can be no object of faith.

I have shewn in my former letter, how a man may arrive at a comfortable assurance, that he is in a justified state, *viz.* by carefully examining his conscience, whether he is really possess'd of all spiritual graces, and studiously endeavouring to keep all the commandments of God, and praying to him for his aid, and using all the means God has appointed to further him in his christian course.

If a man thus brings forth fruits meet for repentance, then he will attain to a sufficient certainty that he is in a good condition; then his heart will not condemn him, and he will have confidence towards God. But at the same time that he confides in God, and has not any distrust in his mercy, if he acts up to his duty; yet it is no fault at all to mistrust himself, and to fear that the best services he can perform, are mean and imperfect. We must take care not, in the least degree, to imagine that any thing we can do, *deserves* God's favour. There is no merit at all in our good works and graces; and they are not otherwise acceptable to God, but thro' the merits of Christ. But though there is no merit in them, yet since they are the effects of divine grace, and upon that account are acceptable to God, we must know by them whether we have the right faith or no.

In order to come to some knowledge and certainty of our faith, we must try it by our living, look upon the fruits that come of it, mark the increase of love and charity by it towards God and our neighbour, and so shall we perceive it to be a true lively faith. If we feel and perceive such a faith in us, we may rejoice in it, and must be diligent to maintain and keep it still in us, and strive that it may daily increase more and more
by

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by well doing; and so we shall be sufficiently, tho' not infallibly, sure that we shall please God by this faith, and at length, when his will is, receive the final reward of it, even the salvation of our souls.

This is the utmost certainty we can ordinarily arrive at in this life, and we are to look for no other; all other kind of assurance is mere fancy and enthusiasm. The fruits of the spirit are not so manifest, but that a man who has not his senses very well exercis'd to the discerning of good and evil, may be easily deceiv'd therein. Hypocrisy is spun oftentimes of a very fine thread; and the heart of man abounding with so much hypocrisy as it doth, and so much self-love and uncharitableness withal, is the most deceitful thing, yea and the most deceivable too, of any thing in the world.

There are on the one side so many mock-graces and specious counterfeits, that carry a semblance of spiritual fruit, but are not the things they seem to be; and on the other side, inordinate love of ourselves partly, and partly want of charity to our brethren, have so dispos'd us to a capacity of being deceiv'd, that it is no wonder, if in passing our judgment, we be very much and very often mistaken: It might rather be a wonder, if we should not at least be sometimes so.

As most errors claim to be a little akin to some truths, so most vices challenge a kind of affinity to some virtues; not so much from any proper, intrinsecal, true resemblance they have with such virtues, as by reason of the common opposition they both have to the same contrary vice. Now deception arises from the appearance of some similitude, when things that are like, but not the same, are taken for the same, because they are like.

They that have given up marks of sincerity for the trial of our graces, have not been able to give any

any infallible characters, whereby to try the sincerity of those marks, so as to remove all possibility of erring. Whence I may infer, that the certainty of man's present standing in grace, but much more them of his eternal future salvation, (altho' I doubt not but by the mercy of God it may be attainable in this life, in such a measure as may sustain the soul of an honest christian with comfort) is not yet either so absolutely necessary, nor so void of fears and doubtings, as you seem to imagine.

Not so necessary, but that a man may be sav'd without it. Many a good soul, no question, there is in the world, that out of the experience of the falseness of his own heart, and the fear of self-deceit, and the sense of his own unworthiness, could never yet attain to be so well persuaded of the sincerity of his own repentance, faith and obedience, as to think God would approve and accept it. The censure were very hard, and a great violation of charity it would be, and of truth also, to pronounce such a man to be out of the state of salvation; or to call such his dissuasion by the name of despair, and under that name to condemn it.

Despair is quite another thing. When a man thinks himself so incapable of God's pardon, that he grows regardless of all duties, and never endeavours to seek God's favour, as believing it in vain; this is properly the sin of despair. But when the fear that God has not yet pardon'd him prompts him to better resolutions, and excites him to a greater care of repentance and newness of life, and makes him more solicitous in the performance of all holy duties, that so he may be the more capable of pardon, it is so far from being any way prejudicial to his salvation, that it is the readiest way to secure it.

But where the greatest certainty is, that can be attain'd to in this life by ordinary means, it is not ordinarily, unless perhaps to some few persons at the very hour of death, so perfect as to exclude all doubtings. The fruits of the spirit, where they are true and sincere, being but imperfect in this life; and the truth and sincerity of them being not always so manifest, but that a man may sometimes be deceiv'd in his judgment about it: it can hardly be but that the assurance, which is wholly grounded thereupon, and can therefore have no more strength than they can give it, must be subject to some fears and doubtings.

I speak not this to shake any man's comfort (God forbid) but to stir up every man's care to abound and increase so much the more in godliness, and in the fruits of the spirit; giving all diligence by walking in the spirit, and subduing the lusts of the flesh, to make his calling and election sure; sure in it self, that he fail not of salvation in the end; and sure to him also, as far as he can, that his comfort in the mean time may be greater and sounder.

This is the assurance the church teaches, and no other; it no where informs us, as you do, that our sins are forgiven, and then that we must have a trust and confidence that they are, which trust implies an assurance of the thing, otherwise we want that faith by which we must be saved. I have shewn already that the passages you cite from her homily are nothing to the purpose. And she every where holds, that faith, and trust, and repentance must be had first, and then we are pardoned; and these graces which comprehend the whole duty of a christian, must be preserved in us during our whole lives, in order to sustain our justified state, and we can have no assurance we are in it, but so far as we are sure these graces remain in us, and are daily augmented by persevering

ring in doing the good works which naturally flow from them.

There is no body doubts, but that a confidence in a pardoning God is essential to true faith; but this is no argument, that a confidence of our own particular pardon is in like manner essential. It would be a denial of christianity to say, that God does not pardon penitent sinners; but still a man may be a very good christian, that has not an absolute assurance of his own pardon. These are manifestly very different things; and that man must needs pass a very rash sentence, who condemns a person that can't perfectly persuade himself he is in a state of grace, altho' at the same time he surely trusts God pardons all those, and him among the rest, who sincerely and entirely turn to him.

St. Paul methinks has fully determin'd this point, 1 Cor. iv. 4. "I know nothing by myself, say he, (my conscience does not reproach me with any thing) yet I am not hereby justified, but he that judgeth me is the Lord." Let us believe the testimony of our conscience more than that of men; but let us have regard to the testimony of God more than that of our own conscience. For also in this case, *God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things.* And if an apostle so illuminated don't think himself justified, though his conscience reprove him with nothing, how much ought we of so inferior a rank to dread the judgment of him, who in order to judge us will consult only his truth and our duties, his graces and our life.

Your confidence and assurance does not imply, that men are pardoned or justified upon the preceding condition of faith and repentance; But supposes that God has pardon'd or justified impenitent sinners, and that they are absolutely sure of this, before they are possess'd of any one grace besides, and before they have done any good work.

But the church maintains the quite contrary, that men are justified upon the aforesaid condition, and that they are competently sure of their justification by having perform'd and continuing to perform it during their whole christian warfare. She instructs men to try their faith by their works, and so to attain a comfortable assurance of their present state, and a good hope of their future.

You tell them to get this assurance first of all, and then all graces and good works are to follow afterwards. But certainly if once men are fully assured of their pardon, there can be no necessity of any thing else. They are confident God's mercy has done all for them already, and if they can but keep this unconditional assurance strongly fixt in their fancies, nothing more can be requisite. And if this alone saves us from our past sins, why should it not also save us from our future? At the most according to your doctrine we are only bound out of mere gratitude to keep God's commandments for his having already sav'd us, and not out of duty that we in the end may attain everlasting life.

You plainly go upon the *Antinomian* scheme, tho' I believe you are not sensible of it. They don't allow repentance to be necessary to obtain remission of sins; they likewise hold men are saved only by a recumbency on God's mercy and Christ's merits; and lastly they hold as a consequence of these principles, and a very natural one it is, that let them do what they will, if they do but hold fast this recumbency, they are safe. Now if you can clear your principles from this unhappy consequence, pray do; otherwise never boast of your conversions: for they are built upon the sand, and cannot be lasting.

You endeavour to prove your doctrine of assurance from scripture. "Hear believing Job (say you) declaring his faith: *I know that my redeem-*

" *er*

“er liqeth.” Well, but doth it appear from this text, that *Job* had his sins pardon'd first, without doing any thing towards it, and that then he had such an assurance, as you suppose, of his salvation, altho' he had not repented of his sins? That he had this assurance first, and obey'd and serv'd God afterwards? I am sure nothing of this kind can be concluded from this text: on the contrary, it is manifest he had first a true trust and confidence in the mercy of God, and a stedfast hope of all good to be receiv'd at his hand, and therefore became perfect and upright, and one that fear'd God, and eschew'd evil, and therefore no doubt God accepted and justified him.

And yet it does not appear he had for some time an absolute assurance of this; for tho' there was none like him upon earth, and he excell'd in all virtues; though he endured the greatest calamities and afflictions with the most exemplary patience, and, notwithstanding the most painful torments, he still held fast his integrity, and firmly relied on the divine providence, and therefore God undoubtedly continued him in his justified state; yet he had great fears, that God had not pardon'd him, and upon that account loaded him with his heavy displeasure. “I have sinned, (*says he*) what shall I do unto thee, what satisfaction shall I make to thee, O thou observer of men? Why dost thou not pardon my transgressions, and take away mine iniquity? I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent; if I be wicked, why then labour I in vain,” in the vindication of my innocence.— And again: “If I should justify myself, mine own mouth would condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.”

Is there any appearance that *Job* had no scruples about his being in a state of salvation? or that he had an absolute assurance of his being forgiven?

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Methinks 'tis evident he had not, altho' it can't be in the least doubted but that he had an entire trust in a pardoning God; and that God had actually forgiven him, though he had no great certainty of it. The necessary consequence of this is, that a sure trust in God's merciful promises does not imply an assurance they are applied to any particular person, and that such an assurance can't be an object of faith. Afterwards indeed God was pleas'd to bestow upon him a strong assurance of his favour towards him, and to inspire him with a prophecy of the resurrection at the last day, and that he, among other holy men, should have a share in it.

"I know (*says he*) that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms shall destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."—

Many learned Men have interpreted this place of a temporal deliverance, but it seems to me more natural to interpret it of the resurrection, as our church does.

Now nothing more can be prov'd from hence, than that *Job*, who was tried in a very extraordinary manner, had as extraordinary a degree of light to support him in the conflict; but this by no means argues, that every good christian shall have the same degree of illumination. *Job* was immediately inspir'd by God with a prophecy of his future bliss, therefore (*says you*) it is the privilege of every one, who surely trusts in God, that he shall have an absolute assurance of his present salvation. I must confess, I can't but admire at this consequence.—There needs no more to be said to this passage.

You go on: "Hear *Thomas*, when having seen he believ'd, crying out, *My Lord and my God.*"

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The meaning of which is, that *St Thomas*, who before was so incredulous, that he would not believe the indisputable testimony of others who had seen the Lord, being now convinc'd of the truth, and of his fault, by his own experience, makes a ready, perfect, and fervent confession, both of his faith and repentance. "I acknowledge, *says he*, "that thou art indeed my Lord, whom I have "hitherto serv'd; and that thou, by raising thyself "up from the dead, hast clearly shew'd thyself to "be my God too: O thou, that art both my "Lord and my God, forgive the weakness of my "faith, and fully sanctify me by thy grace and "spirit." Then Christ pardon'd him, as is sufficiently intimated in the next verse: for he accounts him blessed, who by seeing him had believ'd, altho' he declares them more blessed who have not seen and yet have believ'd, their faith being more perfect than his. Now in *St Thomas's* confession there is not implied any assurance of pardon, as you pretend, but only an ardent desire of it, upon his faith and repentance. And if it did imply such an assurance, he might well have it, since he had an immediate revelation of it from God himself, which men can't now claim as their privilege.

You next desire us to hear *St Paul* clearly describing the nature of his faith, *The life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* That is, I live no longer the life of a Jew, expecting justification by legal performances; but I now live as becomes a christian, believing and practising those things which the son of God requires of me by his gospel, and this I think myself bound to by all the ties of love and duty, since he who lov'd and died for all, consequently lov'd me, and gave himself for me. Now all that can, with the utmost screwing, be gather'd from hence is, that as far as *St Paul* could be sensible of the unassignedness of his own

own faith and the fruits of it; so far he could have an assurance of his Justification. And no question a person endow'd with such extraordinary gifts; might arrive at a very eminent degree of assurance; but it will not follow that every true believer can attain this high degree, much less the highest degree of it. You lastly cite *Col. i. 12*. "Where you say, all the believers, who were with *St Paul*, bear witness: "We give thanks to the father—who hath deliver'd us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear son; in whom we have redemption thro' his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins." Here you manifestly pervert the text. It is not, *We give thanks*; and these words don't relate to *Paul* and *Timothy* who wrote the epistle, but to the *Colossians* to whom they wrote, as appears from the context. "For this cause (says the apostle, v. 9, &c.) we also—don't cease to pray for you,—that ye might be fill'd with the knowledge of his will—that ye might walk worthy of the Lord—strengthen'd with all might—giving thanks unto the father, &c."

Here *St Paul* prays, among other things, that the *Colossians* might acknowledge with all gratitude the great mercy of God, and the infinite benefits which Christ has purchas'd for us, that is, for all christians, by his blood, and by his death; and these are:—That he hath made us (meaning the *Colossians* as well as himself) meet to be inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, by calling us to believe the gospel, and repent of our sins, and by being willing to accept of our imperfect obedience; that he hath deliver'd us from the power of darkness, those of us who were *Jews* from the slavery of sin, and those of us who were *Gentiles*, as the *Colossians* were, from ignorance and heathenism, and hath given us a right to everlasting glory,
Christ

Christ having merited for us redemption, by procuring of God the pardon of our sins, if we persevere in our duty.

This is the condition must be always implied, as plainly appears from ver. xxi. &c. "You that were somewhat alienated, and enemies in your mind, by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable, and un-reprovable in his sight: if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel." Now I would ask, Is it certain that all the *Colossians* had an absolute assurance they had receiv'd these benefits? No, most undoubtedly. All then that can be meant here is, that we are to give thanks to the father, for that he and Christ have, in great mercy and love to mankind, done their parts to redeem and save us, and that we must take diligent care to employ the grace they have given us, in working out our own salvation.

Now this implies nothing of the assurance you speak of; and all that can possibly be concluded from hence is, an assurance we do and shall obtain all good things from God, if we do what God requires of us; but not an assurance of our salvation only by a confidence in the love of God, without doing any thing at all. It is, in short, a conditional, not an absolute assurance, that may be inferr'd from hence. And thus your proofs for this point are manifestly impertinent; and at your rate of citing scripture, the most whimsical person in the world may demonstrate what he pleases from it.

You assert, that if we read the *Acts* of the Apostles, we shall find, that all those who believ'd, receiv'd the faith in a moment. Now I can't perceive this, I must confess. They did indeed receive it very soon, but not instantaneously. We read

read that the apostles, in their discourses to the people, prov'd by many arguments that Jesus was the true Messiah, and that salvation was not to be attain'd but through faith and repentance, upon the profession of which they were baptiz'd. The grace of God powerfully accompanied the words by them deliver'd, and exerted the minds of the hearers first to apprehend the true meaning of them, then to give their assent to them, then to have a sure confidence in those gracious promises to the truth of which they assented, and lastly to attain a good degree of love to God, which naturally produces all other graces. And by these steps a lively and saving faith is form'd.

Now these several acts must necessarily follow one another, let the distance of time be never so small: and consequently it does not appear, that there is any such thing as an instantaneous infusion of faith, as you suppose. This faith made perfect by love, and other graces, is the condition, as I have said, of our justification. This you deny; on the contrary you affirm, that no faith is to be had before justification, but we are first justified or pardon'd, and then the habit of faith is instantaneously infus'd, to wit, such a faith as implies an assurance, that we are actually pardon'd.

For this absurd doctrine I affirm you have not the least foundation either in the Acts of the Apostles, or any where else. And what you say of your own experience of those who now receive your imaginary heavenly gifts, is all folly and madness. It is but a mock faith, which you can neither understand yourself, nor explain to others; and I heartily pity the poor people, who are thus miserably deluded by you, speaking lies to them in the name of the Lord, subverting their souls by your intemperate zeal in the unwearied propagation of your dangerous errors.

I have

I have now, I trust, fully confuted the doctrines you lay the greatest stress upon, I shall next but just take notice of some other mistakes in your *Appeal*. And 1. Your notion of a visible church is far from true. According to our church it is "a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administer'd." Now by *faithful men*, you understand only inwardly true believers. And you say the visible church is a congregation of such faithful men visibly join'd together to hear God's word, and partake of his supper. But how can men invisibly or inwardly faithful be visibly join'd together? This seems to be a contradiction in terms. By *faithful men*, the church understands men visibly or outwardly professing the true faith, as plainly appears from her 26th article, where she declares, *that in the visible church the evil be ever mingled with the good*; and so long as they continue only invisibly evil, she looks upon them as visibly faithful.

2. You insinuate, that the sacraments are only requisite to the well being of a visible church; whereas the church declares, that the due administration of them is an essential property thereof, so that there cannot be a visible church without it. — I suppose you hinted this to gratify your loving disciples, the *Quakers*.

3. Let me observe, that there can be no due administration of the sacraments, and consequently no visible church, where there are no bishops, and priests lawfully ordain'd by them. This is a matter, I am afraid, you make no account of; for you talk of the *Moravian* church, and of sacraments there administer'd, altho' they have no episcopal ordination among them. This, let me tell you, is contrary to the 23d and 26th articles, and to the ordinal of our church; therefore in these points also you widely differ from her doctrine which

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which you have subscrib'd, with what conscience you best can tell.

4. You affirm, that the canons of the Church of England were never legally establish'd by the church; by which you shew how little you are vers'd in our ecclesiastical history. If you will please to consult Archbishop Wake's *State of the Church*, he will testify, p. 507, that the canons were pass'd in the convocation of the province of *Canterbury*, *an.* 1603. and in that of *York*, *an.* 1609. p. 508. But no wonder you dislike the canons, since there are so many things in them to condemn your disorderly proceedings; and never pretend to vindicate yourself, from several of the clergy's bare neglect to observe some of them; for there is a wide difference between this, and your contemptuous violation of them, in direct opposition to the authority of your superiors.

You are angry at me for putting you in mind of your breaking the solemn promise you made at your ordination, to obey the governors of the church, and submit yourselves to all their godly admonitions and injunctions. You would come off by saying, their admonitions are ungodly, and their injunctions contrary to the word of God. But if you are mistaken, as you undoubtedly are, this pretence will never excuse you.

You glory much in your conversions. You insist upon the fact, Christ is preach'd, and sinners are converted unto God. This I utterly deny, how great a madman soever you may take me to be. If your doctrines be false, 'tis plain Christ is not preach'd. And if several be induc'd not to commit some scandalous crimes; yet if you have perverted them to pride, censoriousness, strife, bitter zeal, heresy, despising their lawful pastors, and those who adhere to them; if they are notoriously guilty of these, and the like damnable sins, let them have what pretended imaginary faith they will,

they

they are no more converted than yourself who lead them into them both by your preaching and example. For let me tell you, these are much more dangerous and devilish sins, than those which it may be they have left.

You give a deplorable account of the debt you have contracted by the building of your meeting-houses. I commiserate your case, if true. But let me tell you, you are the less to be pitied, unless you can bring better proof, than you have hitherto done, of the necessity there is to give yourself all this trouble and expence. And till you do that, all wise and considerate men, without any breach of charity, will look upon procuring subscriptions for carrying on your designs, as little less than picking the poor people's pockets, and robbing 'em of that which should maintain their families. I have nothing more at present to add, but to beseech God, both for your own and your hearers sake, to give you a right sense of your errors; and to subscribe myself,

Reverend Sir,

Your humble Servant,

F I N I S.

Errata in the first Letter.

Page 7. line 36, read, either in; p. 9. l. 22. r. but no man;
p. 12. l. 6. r. without whose grace; ib. l. 16. r. principle;
p. 14. l. penult, r. xix, 28.

I have nothing more at present to say, but to be-
 lieve that which I have said, and to maintain their character.
 I am, my dear friends, your affectionate friend,
 and your obedient servant,

62 675729

John D. Smith

3. 14 1 3

Entered as Second-Class Matter, June 26, 1901.

Page 2, line 22, read, "it is in a... it is no more"
Page 3, line 1, read, "it is in a... it is no more"
Page 4, line 1, read, "it is in a... it is no more"

